

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Governance)	Governance Committee	Wednesday, 1 June 2022

Draft Annual Governance Statement

Is this report confidential?	No
------------------------------	----

Is this decision key?	Not applicable
-----------------------	----------------

Purpose of the Report

- To present the Annual Governance Statement for the period 2021/22.

Recommendations

- That the Annual Governance Statement be approved as a correct statement of the Councils governance environment and be recommended to the Leader and Chief Executive for signature.

Reasons for recommendations

- The Annual Governance Statement has been prepared in accordance with CIPFA/SOLACE Guidance and has drawn from evidence sources identified in the statement to reach its conclusions.

Other options considered and rejected

- The Council are legally obliged to prepare an Annual Governance Statement.

Corporate outcomes

- The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	A strong local economy
Clean, safe and healthy communities	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area

Background to the report

- The council is required to ensure that it has in place a sound system of governance, that it regularly reviews the effectiveness of that system and the it continuously seeks

to achieve best value in service delivery. As part of that, the council is required to publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

7. The Annual Governance Statement is developed alongside the Statement of Accounts but assesses the governance framework for the whole council and all of its activities. The form of the AGS and the approach taken to its development is based on guidance that is produced by CIPFA and SOLACE.
8. The guidance from CIPFA and SOLACE sets out that councils are obliged to
 - Develop and maintain an up to date local code of governance consistent with the 'core principles' set out in the framework
 - Review their existing governance arrangements against the framework
 - Prepare a governance statement in order to report publicly on the extent to which the council complies with its own code on an annual basis including how it monitored the effectiveness of its governance arrangements in the year and on any planned changes in the coming period
9. The Annual Governance Statement is required to be signed by the most senior officer (normally the Chief Executive) and the most senior member (normally the Leader), but it is developed and owned collectively by senior officers and members.
10. The guidance states that there should be a review undertaken by a body, such as the Governance Committee, that has not been involved in the production of the AGS.
11. The statement has five sections:
 - Section one: introduction
 - Section two: the council's responsibility in producing an annual governance statement and the purpose of the annual governance statement
 - Section three: the governance framework, and how the council complies with its local code
 - Section four: how the council reviews the effectiveness of the governance framework
 - Section five: the steps that have been taken to test and enhance the council's governance framework, and the actions that need to be taken in the coming period.
12. This report provides an overview of the key elements of the AGS, with the full AGS attached at appendix A.
13. The AGS reflects that the Local Code of Corporate Governance was refreshed in March this year, and to reflect feedback from members on the length of the document the code has been hyperlinked rather than reproduced in the body of the statement. Members will note at section 4 of the report the Service Lead for Audit and Risk. Section 5 of the report details identified governance improvements.

Risk

14. The risks identified within the AGS (the areas of the governance environment that require strengthening) will be managed by the Corporate Governance Group who will monitor the implementation of the improvements using the GRACE system.

Climate change and air quality

15. The work noted in this report does not impact the climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda and all environmental considerations are in place.

Equality and Diversity

16. Not applicable

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

17. No comments.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

18. Contained in the body of the report.

There are no background papers to this report

Appendices

Appendix A – Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 (draft)

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Chris Moister (Director of Governance/Monitoring Officer)	chris.moister@chorley.gov.uk	01257 515160	